THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS [MAJ. GEN. (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI]: (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) and (d) NH-34 starts from Kolkata airport and ends at Dalkhola. Improvement of this road from Kolkata airport to km. 31 and km. 398 to Dalkhola has already been completed. The stretch from km.31 to km.398 has been taken up for capacity augmentation and strengthening with loan assistance of the Asian Development Bank. This work is scheduled to be completed by 2006-07. Four laning of the stretch from Dalkhola to Siliguri (NH-31) is in progress. It is scheduled for completion by 2007.

Funding of highways

1062. SHRI B.J. PANDA: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is proposed to hike in petrol prices to fund highways, as reported in the Asian Age dated the 23rd December, 2002;

(b) if so, what are the details of the proposal;

(c) the amount that would be garnered out of this and the highways that would be funded;

(d) whether it is also proposed to enhance toll tax for the purpose; and

(e) if so, the details thereof and the amount that would be earned as a result thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS [MAJ. GEN. (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI]: (a) and (b) This Ministry has proposed to levy an additional cess of 30 paise per litre on petrol and diesel for funding of Second Phase of the National Highways Development Project (NHDP).

(c) An amount of around Rs. 2100 crores per year is expected to be garnered out of this additional cess for funding the Second Phase of NHDP.

(d) and (e) At present there is no proposal to enhance the user fee (toll tax). The user fee earlier notified is linked to wholesale price index.